IN THE CLAIMS JC17 Rec'd PCT/PTO 20 SEP 2005

- 1-16 (canceled)
- 17. (new) A deployable apparatus for creating a local reduction in wave height, the apparatus comprising at least one mat-like structure including:
- a buoyant or semi-buoyant upper surface portion operatively disposed at or near the water surface; and
- a plurality of drag inducing elements disposed below the upper surface portion, wherein the elements are collapsible or compressible when the apparatus is not in use.
- 18. (new) An apparatus as claimed in claim 17, wherein the upper surface portion comprises a plurality of flexibly linked buoyant or semi-buoyant sections.
- 19. (new) An apparatus as claimed in claim 17, wherein the upper surface portion comprises a single sheet of flexible buoyant or semi-buoyant material.
- 20. (new) An apparatus as claimed in claim 17, further comprising a plurality of flexible fluid retaining structures disposed thereon.
- 21. (new) An apparatus as claimed in claim 20, wherein the flexible fluid retaining structures comprise a network grid of pipes or tubes.
- 22. (new) An apparatus as claimed in claim 20, wherein fluid is maintained in the flexible structures under pressure.
- 23. (new) An apparatus as claimed in claim 20, further comprising at least one pump for supplying fluid to said flexible fluid retaining structures.
 - 24. (new) An apparatus as claimed in claim 22, wherein the fluid is water.
- 25. (new) An apparatus as claimed in claim 17, wherein at least one of the drag inducing elements comprise shaped elements formed from a compressible material.
- 26. (new) An apparatus as claimed in claim 17, wherein at least one of the drag inducing elements comprise collapsible drogue anchors.
- 27. (new) An apparatus as claimed in claim 17, wherein at least one of the drag inducing elements are inflatable with an inflating fluid.
 - 28. (new) An apparatus as claimed in claim 27, wherein the inflating fluid is water.
- 29. (new) A deployable apparatus for creating a local reduction in wave height, the apparatus comprising at least one mat-like structure including:

a buoyant or semi-buoyant upper surface portion operatively disposed at or near the water surface;

a plurality of drag inducing elements disposed below the upper surface portion, wherein the elements are collapsible or compressible when the apparatus is not in use; and

a plurality of flexible fluid retaining structures disposed thereon the apparatus,

wherein inflating fluid for the inflatable drag inducing elements is supplied from the flexible fluid retaining structures.

- 30. (new) An apparatus as claimed in claim 29, wherein the leading end of the apparatus is inclined downwardly with respect to incident waves.
- 31. (new) A system for deploying and recovering an apparatus for creating a local reduction in wave height comprising:

an apparatus as claimed in claim 1;

a deployment vessel;

a storage device on the vessel for the apparatus; and

means for paying out and recovering the apparatus.

32. (new) A system as claimed in claim 31, wherein the storage device is a storage reel about which the apparatus is wound when not in use